



CALIFORNIA WATER BOARDS

State Water Resources Control Board

Regional Water Quality Control Boards

Water Board Function: Land disposal regulation

Regulate the discharge of waste to land at nearly 900 facilities statewide to protect water quality. These facilities, which discharge waste that must be contained, are primarily landfills, industrial waste piles and ponds, and some mines.

Water Board Program(s) Relevant to Function:

Land Disposal Program. Most Land Disposal Program facilities are also subject to requirements of the Stormwater Program.

Problem/Issue Description:

Waste that requires containment must be discharged to waste management units such as landfills and industrial waste ponds. These discharges are long-term operations where releases of waste can pollute groundwater and surface water. These facilities are required to meet regulations regarding siting, construction, design, and maintenance. Old landfills have caused groundwater contamination, and once a groundwater supply is polluted it is difficult and expensive to clean up.

Overview of Function:

The Regional Water Boards issue waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for facilities subject to the Land Disposal Program regulations. Regional Board staff perform inspections and review self-monitoring reports from the owners/operators to determine compliance. Regional Boards take appropriate informal and formal enforcement action.

State and Regional Water Board authority for regulation of waste discharges to land are found in California Water Code, Division 7, Section 13000, Section 133260, 13263, and 13172. The regulations specifically addressing solid waste are found in California Code of Regulations, Title 27, Chapter 3. In addition, requirements are found in State and Regional Board plans and policies (specifically Resolution 68-16) and the Region's water quality control plans (Basin Plans). Basin Plans complement and implement the California Water Code and State Board policies. These plans designate the beneficial uses of surface and ground water, setting the narrative and numerical water quality objectives to protect those beneficial uses, and establishing implementation plans to achieve the standards established by the plan.

The Program works with the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), US EPA's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Subtitle D program for municipal solid waste landfills, and the Department of Toxic Substance Control for the regulation of hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal.

Role of Water Board Staff:

The State Board administers the Land Disposal Program by providing program administration assistance.

Regional Board staff prepares and submits waste discharge requirements (permit) for land disposal to Regional Board for consideration and adoption, coordinates with staff from California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) and local agencies, performs inspections and report reviews, and takes informal and formal enforcement actions.

Role of Regional Board Members:

Conducts public hearings, and considers and adopts permit.

Role of State Board Members:

Reviews petitions from Regional Board issuance of permit. Adopts policies and regulations.

Primary Issues of Concern:

An ongoing issue of concern is adequate staffing to inspect facilities and review technical reports regarding construction and regarding groundwater monitoring data to ensure earliest detection of a release and appropriate corrective action. A current issue of concern is ensuring that all facilities comply with regulations to have adequate financial assurance in the event of a release of waste to waters of the State.

Definition of Key Terms:

Waste management units are components of a landfill. Some may be lined to contain waste. Older units may not have protective liners.